

PRESS RELEASE

House Armed Services Committee Bob Stump, Chairman

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OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BOB STUMP DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY BUDGET

Today the committee meets to review the Department of the Army's budget request for fiscal year 2002. The proposed Army budget represents an increase of approximately \$6 billion to cover pay raises, enhanced housing opportunities for military families, and base operating funds.

I commend the Army leadership for recognizing the need for additional resources. However, even with this increase, the Army still faces some serious challenges. For example, in order to stop the deterioration of aging facilities, the Army cut \$300 million from the operations tempo account and moved the money into real property maintenance. I am concerned that the Army was compelled to cut into current readiness accounts in order to properly fund its facilities.

The Army also faces a significant challenge in modernizing the current force while simultaneously transforming into the "objective force." While funds for both goals are included in this budget, it is clear that neither is properly resourced. In fact, the unfunded priority list provided the committee shows that the Army needs approximately \$2.5 billion additional dollars to properly fund current force modernization this year alone.

This said, while it is clear that additional funding is needed for key programs, this budget takes a strong, positive step in the right direction.

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